

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 227489

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY WILLIAM D. ROGERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT PANAMA 5831, SENT SECSTATE, INFO USCINCSO,  
PANCANAL, SAN JOSE, BOGOTA, SEPT 23:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 5831

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PN

SUBJECT: EMBASSY STONED BY PANAMANIAN STUDENTS

SUMMARY: PROTESTING AGAINST THE PRESENCE OF U.S. BASES IN THE CANAL ZONE, THE SECRETARY'S COMMENTS AT THE SOUTHERN GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE LAST WEEK, AND THE COMPLICITY OF GEN. TORRIJOS AND THE GOP WITH AMERICAN "IMPERIALISM", APPROXIMATELY 600-800 PANAMANIAN STUDENTS RIOTED AND STONED THE U.S. EMBASSY THIS MORNING. STONING CONTINUED FOR THIRTY MINUTES. NO EMBASSY PERSONNEL WERE INJURED, BUT OVER 100 WINDOWS IN CHANCERY WERE BROKEN AND FIVE VEHICLES BELONGING TO EMBASSY OR EMBASSY EMPLOYEES WERE DAMAGED. NATIONAL GUARD (GN) RESPONSE WAS SLOW AND INADEQUATE TO SITUATION. EMBASSY IS SENDING STRONG NOTE OF PROTEST TO FOREIGN MINISTRY OVER INCIDENT AND GN HANDLING OF IT. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY WAS INFORMED LATE YESTERDAY THAT VARIOUS GROUPS OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS PLANNED TO DEMONSTRATE TODAY AT THE CHANCERY

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PAGE 02 STATE 227489

TO PROTEST U.S. BASES IN THE CANAL ZONE, SECRETARY KISSINGER'S USE OF 'UNILATERAL' IN REFERENCE TO U.S. DEFENSE RIGHTS UNDER A NEW CANAL TREATY AT THE SOUTHERN GOVERNORS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK, AND AGAINST CONCEPT OF 'JOINT DEFENSE' OF CANAL BY U.S.

AND NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS ENVISIONED IN STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES  
SIGNED IN FEBRUARY, 1974.

2. NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF STUDENTS. SHORTLY BEFORE 10:00  
THIS MORNING APPROXIMATELY 600-800 STUDENTS ARRIVED AT EMBASSY.  
WE ESTIMATE THAT AT LEAST 90 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WERE FROM  
SECO DARY SCHOOLS, MOST PROMINENTLY AMONG WHOM, AS WAS TO BE  
EXPECTED, WERE STUDENTS FROM THE INSTITUTO NACIONAL. LARGE  
NUMBER OF BANNERS AND PLACARDS FROM THE FER (FRENTE ESTUDANTIL  
REVOLUCIONARIO) WHOSE MAJOR BASE OF SUPPORT IS IN THE INSTITUTO  
NACIONAL CONFIRM THEIR PRESENCE. THERE WERE LESS THAN ONE  
HUNDRED STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA, ALTHOUGH  
THEY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN ORGANIZING THE PROTEST AND  
RIOT. BOTH FSR (FRACCION SOCIALISTA REVOLUCIONARIA, LEFT-WING  
GROUP BASED PRIMARILY IN UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL), AND GUAYKUCHO  
GROUPS WERE PRESENT. (GUAYKUCHO ALSO DERIVES SUPPORT FROM  
UNIVERSITY AND IN PARTICULAR LAW SCHOOL STUDENTS). THERE WAS  
NO INDICATION OF ANY FEP (FEDERACION ESTUDANTIL PANAMENA)  
INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEMONSTRATION.

3. PROTEST THEMES. PLACARDS AND BANNERS CARRIED BY STUDENTS  
CONCENTRATED ON THE "ANTI-BASES" THEME. REPRESENTATIVE SIGNS  
READ: "BASES NO", "NI UN SOLO SOLDADO", "YANQUI BASES NO",  
"NO DEFENSA CONJUNTA, NO DEFENSA UNILATERAL", AND "EL PUEBLO  
ARMADO NO SERA APLASTADO". OTHER SIGNS COVERED THE ANTI-  
IMPERIALIST AND ANTI-CAPITALIST FRONT. GENERAL TORRIJOS AND  
THE GOP WERE PROMINENT TARGETS OF VERBAL ABUSE. GOVERNMENT  
WAS DENOUNCED FOR ITS COMPLICITY WITH THE U.S. ON THE DEFENSE  
ISSUE, AND FOR NOT TELLING THE WHOLE TRUTH IN ITS REVELATIONS  
OF TREATY NEGOTIATING POSITIONS AND PROGRESS. TORRIJOS'  
REVOLUTION WAS AGAIN DERIDED AS A "CARICATURE OF A REVOLUTION".  
SECRETARY KISSINGER'S COMMENTS ON THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS  
WERE BLASTED.

4. VIOLENCE ORGANIZED. AFTER A STUDENT RINGLEADER'S STRIDENT  
DENUNCIATION OF THE ABOVE THEMES (DELIVERED THROUGH BULLHORN),  
ROCKS BEGAN TO BE THROWN. THERE CAN BE NO REPEAT NO DOUBT THAT  
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PAGE 03 STATE 227489

THE ROCK-THROWING WAS PLANNED AND ORGANIZED AHEAD OF TIME. IN  
FACT, EMBASSY INFORMATION OF YESTERDAY SPECIFIED THAT VIOLENCE  
WOULD BE IN THE OFFING. STONING CONTINUED FOR APPROXIMATELY  
THIRTY (30) MINUTES AND WAS HEAVY. SOME PAINT BOMBS WERE HURLED  
AGAINST THE BUILDING'S FACADE. IN ADDITION, AND FOR THE FIRST  
TIME, TWO (2) MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE THROWN, ONE EXPLODED,  
THEY WERE FOUND ON EMBASSY GROUNDS AFTER THE RIOT BROKE UP.

5. DAMAGE REPORT. INITIAL ESTIMATES SHOW VIRTUALLY ALL FRONT  
AND SIDE OF BUILDING WINDOWS SHATTERED FROM GROUND TO TOP  
FLOORS (278 PANES) (EMBASSY ADMIN COUNSELOR ESTIMATES DAMAGE WORSE  
THIS TIME THAN OF LAST AUGUST), FIVE VEHICLES BELONGING TO

EMBASSY OR EMBASSY EMPLOYEES IN PARKING LOT AND ON STREET OUTSIDE OF GROUNDS WERE DAMAGED. ROCKS AND PAINT ALSO DAMAGED SOME OFFICE EQUIPMENT INSIDE THE BUILDING.

6. NATIONAL GUARD RESPONSE. NATIONAL GUARD (GN) GROOPS STATIONED AROUND CHANCERY THIS MORNING WERE ARMED AT OUTSET OF VIOLENCE ONLY WITH RIOT BATONS AND WERE NOT IN FULL COMBAT DRESS. FOR AT LEAST TWENTY TO TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES OF THE STONING THEY DID NOT MAKE ANY MOVES TO CONTROL THE ROCK THROWING. EMBOFF NOTED THAT STUDENTS HURLED STONES OVER THE WALL OF THE EMBASSY PARKING LOT DIRECTLY ONTO THE VEHICLES PARKED IN IT WHILE GUARDSMEN LOOKED ON. ONLY AFTER THE PERIOD OF TIME MENTIONED ABOVE DID THE GUARDSMEN DON GAS MASKS AND TAKE UP CARBINES. AS SOON AS THEY DID, THEY BEGIN TO MOVE THE STUDENTS FROM THE FRONT OF THE CHANCERY TO ONE SIDE USING TROOPS, MOTORCYCLE POLICE, AND GN TRUCKS. STUDENTS THREW ROCKS AT GN, BUT WERE FORCED FROM FRONT TO REAR OF CHANCERY. TEN TO TWELVE TEAR GAS CANISTERS WERE FIRED AND STUDENTS DISPERSED. OUR INFORMATION INDICATED THAT FIVE SQUADS OF GUARDIA WERE STATIONED AROUND THE GROUNDS, BUT THEY WERE INSUFFICIENTLY ARMED, OR DIRECTED, OR BOTH TO STEM THE VIOLENCE. REPORTEDLY, STUDENTS ALSO STONED FOREIGN MINISTRY AFTER LEAVING EMBASSY. WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY THAT STUDENTS ARE INCENSED OVER GN USE OF GAS AND ARE PLANNING RETALIATION AGAINST GN. OTHER REPORTS INDICATE THEY ARE TALKING OF A REPEAT PERFORMANCE AT EMBASSY TOMORROW.

7. EMBASSY IS SENDING STRONG PROTEST NOTE TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS TO PROTEST INADEQUACY OF GUARDIA PROTECTION.  
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PAGE 04 STATE 227489

8. COMMENT. VIOLENCE OF THIS DEMONSTRATION APPEARS TO BE THE WORST HERE IN RECENT YEARS. AND IT COMES AT A PARTICULARLY INOPPORTUNE TIME FO U.S., AS WELL AS, IF NOT MORE SO, FOR THE GOP. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE PROTEST WAS NEARLY AS CRITICAL OF TORRIJOS AND THE GOP AS IT WAS OF THE UNITED STATES' PRESENCE AND POLICIES. FIRST REACTIONS FROM THE GOP INDICATE THEIR FRUSTRATION AND DISMAY AT THE VIOLENCE. PRESIDENT LAKAS HAS ALREADY TELEPHONED THE AMBASSADOR TO APOLOGIZE. THE ONE THING THAT IS CRYSTAL CLEAR IS THAT THE GOP IS FINDING IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO BUY OFF, PLACATE OR OTHERWISE CONTROL ITS STUDENT CRITICS. JORDEN UNQUOTE. ROBINSON

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